

*Treasures
of
Pioneer History*

Compiled by

KATE B. CARTER

Kate B. Carter
Feb. 15 - 69



Daughters of Utah Pioneers

Salt Lake City, Utah

1957

VOLUME SIX

PHILEMON C. MERRILL COMPANY

Philemon C. Merrill was born November 12, 1820, in Byron, Genesee County, New York, a son of Samuel Merrill and Phoebe Odell. He was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints March, 1839, near Carthage, Illinois. He joined the Mormon Battalion in Council Bluffs and served as Second Lieutenant in Company B, marching to California.

Philemon came to the Salt Lake Valley after his honorable discharge from service with Captain Jefferson Hunt and seven other members of the Battalion, arriving October 11, 1847, where he found his father, mother and two sisters. He returned to Winter Quarters for his family and came back to Utah October 16, 1849. In 1851 he went to the States and brought forty-four wagons with goods back for Thomas S. Williams.

Mr. Merrill filled a mission to Europe in 1853-56 and on his return was put in charge of a wagon company crossing the plains to Utah. At various times he lived in Provo, Farmington, Morgan County, Utah, Soda Springs, Idaho, thence to Bennington and, in 1876 was called to the southern country, settling in Arizona. He was afterwards ordained a Patriarch in the St. Joseph Stake, Arizona. He died September 15, 1904 at Thatcher, Arizona.

John Crook "I was born in Trenton, Lancashire, England October 11, 1831. My father heard of the new religion and went to Bolton to hear them preach, and in September 1840, he, and Robert Holden, were baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In the spring of 1847, I was baptized by Uncle Peter Mayho in the brook by Hallith Wood . . .

"Jan. 1st, 1851. We left old England to come to America in the ship Ellen. There were about 475 passengers. On the 16th of March a tug boat took two more vessels besides ours up to New Orleans. On March 18th we started up the river for St. Louis; we paid \$2.50 per head, baggage free. On the 25th we landed in St. Louis. It was very cold. Snow on the ground while there; stayed until April 13th, then started for Kanessville. Twenty days on the road, on a sand bar three days; very cold weather; river very low. Landed all safe May 2nd. The Saints were fitting to start for Salt Lake City, Utah.

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"About the first of June 1856, we left Hang Hollow for Florence, Nebraska. The gathering place was about six miles from Bluff City across the Missouri River. We crossed our wagons on a ferry boat the second day of June. The first company of Saints to cross the plains was organized on the fourth of June under the direction of Philemon Merrill, as captain, who had crossed the plains nine times before. The company consisted of fifty wagons, divided into companies of ten with a sub-captain.

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"On the 14th of August we nooned in a little valley between what is called Big and Little Mountains. This valley is at the head of Parley's canyon. No road down there, travel went over Little Mountain and down Emigration canyon. While nooning there a small train of wagons under the charge of Br. Parrish came along in a rush. They had left Florence about the same time as our train and we had encountered them once or twice on the Platte bottoms. They had bragged of beating us into Salt Lake City by two weeks or more, as their company was small and would have the advantage of feed, etc. Teams, they said, would be in a better condition, but when they understood the climb of the hill, the roads being slippery with showers, their teams gave out and had to double and triple in some cases. Well, we had quite a time also in getting over the mountains. We had to camp in Emigration canyon that night. Early the next morning we hitched up and about four miles down the canyon the road passed over what is termed as Hogs Back, a road cut through a hill. And then we had a full view of Salt Lake City and valley. There was the blue water of Salt Lake in the far west and the beautiful settlements in the foreground. Enchanting to the eye, there was

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"On September 6, 1856 I married Mary Giles in Provo City. We bought ten acres of land joining on the east line of Provo City and got James W. Snow, county surveyor of Utah county, to divide it up into lots, giving us two lots each, six families of the Giles connections. Each sold a yoke of cattle to purchase bread stuffs also land for farming purposes. We made some adobes and built two small houses for the Giles families. Next year we built two more houses, one for me and wife and one for Thomas Rasband and family.

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"Along in June, 1859 the west half of Heber was laid off in city lots, and in July we moved camp to that city and then commenced hauling logs and building a house. In the spring of 1860 many families moved up from Provo, I believe forty families. On the 14th of July, William Fenn was found drowned in the Provo River. The river was high and in crossing on foot the current took him down. He had been in the stream about two weeks. Had to move him on a sheet, dug a hole in the bank of the river and buried him there. Father Wood acted as coroner."

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John Crook died March 31, 1921 at the age of eighty-nine years, one of the stalwart builders of the valley.—*Ethel Johnson*

CANUTE PETERSON COMPANY

Canute Peterson was born in Eidsfjord, Hardanger, Norway. He emigrated to America with his parents in 1837 and settled in La Salle county, Illinois where he received the Gospel and was baptized August 12, 1842. He was ordained a Seventy and during the next several years did missionary work among the Norwegians in the vicinity of Wisconsin.

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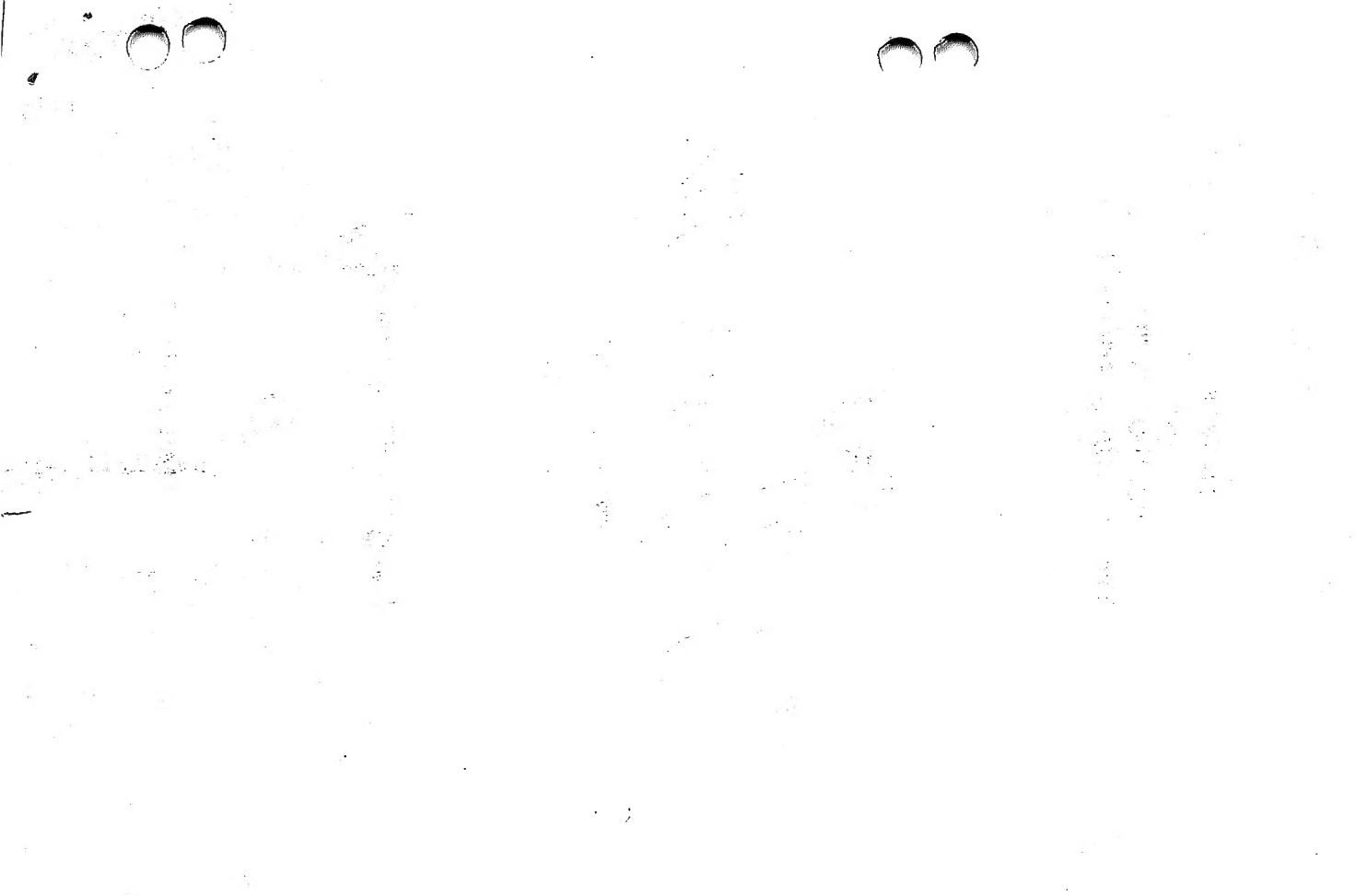


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